



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

Flight 93 National Memorial

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# Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

## Flight 93 National Memorial

July 2011

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## **I. Questions About the Site**

### **1. Where did the plane go down?**

The plane crashed in an open field next to a wooded area in Stonycreek Township, Somerset County, Pennsylvania. The nearest town is Shanksville.

### **2. Did it go straight into the ground?**

Flight 93 struck the ground at a 40 degree angle almost upside down, hitting right wing and nose first, at a speed of between 563-580 miles per hour.<sup>1</sup> It was carrying approximately 7,000 gallons of Jet A fuel at impact.<sup>2</sup>

### **3. Did anyone see the crash?**

Workers at the metal scrap yard a few hundred yards from the impact site witnessed the crash.<sup>3</sup>

### **4. What did the crash sound like?**

Residents have described the sound as similar to thunder, or like an explosion, or a dynamite blast used in area coal mines. In some homes and at the nearby school, windows rattled, doors blew open, objects fell from shelves, suspended ceiling tiles rose up then fell back down into place. In a few nearby homes, windows were broken, masonry was cracked, and houses shifted on their foundations.<sup>4</sup>

### **5. How big was the crater?**

The first responders described the crater as about 15 feet deep and about 30 feet across. It was irregularly shaped.<sup>5</sup> During the investigation the crater was excavated to an area measuring 85' x 85' and 27-40' deep to recover debris and evidence.<sup>6</sup>

### **6. What did the wreckage look like?**

The wreckage around and inside the crater consisted of largely unrecognizable pieces of twisted metal, pieces of the landing gear of the plane, a tire, the frames of some of the seats, bits of charred paper, and remnants of luggage and clothing.<sup>7</sup>

Most of the pieces of wreckage were quite small, the size of a notebook or smaller. Many more pieces of wreckage, also quite small, were recovered during the investigation when the crater was excavated. Extensive searches through the wooded area south of the crash site, and even in the tree tops yielded more debris from the crash. The largest and heaviest pieces recovered were parts of the plane's two engines and a piece of fuselage with several window openings. This fuselage piece measured about six feet by seven feet and was found near the

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<sup>1</sup> The 9/11 Commission Reports lists the speed at impact as 580 m.p.h. (page 14) while the National Transportation Safety Board Flight Path Study for United Airlines Flight 93 reports an impact speed of 563 m.p.h. (page 2); Jere Longman in his book, *Among the Heroes*, reports that the plane struck the ground at 575 m.p.h. (p. 215).

<sup>2</sup> Environmental Resources Management (ERM), 2002, *Final Closure Report*, 8.

<sup>3</sup> Jere Longman, *Among the Heroes* (New York: Harper Collins, 2002), 212.

<sup>4</sup> Various oral histories recorded by the Flight 93 National Memorial Oral History Project.

<sup>5</sup> Longman, 216.

<sup>6</sup> ERM, 3, 11.

<sup>7</sup> Longman, 215-16; Flight 93 National Memorial Oral History Project.

woods south of the crater.<sup>8</sup> Lightweight, paper items were found as far away as New Baltimore, eight miles away.<sup>9</sup>

**7. Did they find the plane's black boxes here?**

Yes. Both of the plane's recorders, the so-called "black boxes" (which actually are orange), were found in the crash site crater. The flight data recorder was recovered on Thursday, September 13 at 4:20 PM at a depth of 15 feet. On September 14, at 8:30 PM, the cockpit voice recorder was found at a depth of 25 feet. Both were turned over to the National Transportation Safety Board for analysis.<sup>10</sup> (None of the black boxes from Flight 11 and Flight 175 were recovered in the rubble of the World Trade Center. At the Pentagon, only the Flight Data Recorder from Flight 77 yielded information.)

**8. Where are the recovered plane parts now located?**

The FBI said in a news conference on September 24, 2001 that approximately 95% of the plane pieces which were recovered were turned over to United Airlines.<sup>11</sup> Several plane pieces are part of the collection of the Smithsonian Museum of American History and were used in their September 11th exhibit, "Bearing Witness to History". These include a GTE Airfone, a seat belt, and a piece of the plane's exterior. The black boxes are in the hands of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

**9. How much of Flight 93 were they able to recover?**

Investigators recovered thousands of pieces of the aircraft.

**10. Did they find a lot of other things at the crash site?**

Yes. By thorough searching, the investigators were able to recover enough remains to identify everyone that was on board the plane using dental records, fingerprints, or DNA analysis. They were also able to find many personal effects belonging to the passengers and crew, including jewelry and items of clothing. These were returned to their families.

Lightweight paper items were found as far away as eight miles from the crash site. The National Transportation and Safety Board said that given the southwest winds of 9 knots (10 miles per hour) that day, it was "not only plausible, but probable" that debris would be carried over the mountain ridge to New Baltimore.<sup>12</sup>

**11. Is the crater still there?**

During the investigation, heavy equipment was used to excavate the crater to recover debris and evidence. Investigators continued to find debris to a depth of 35-40 feet. The soil was raked and sifted by the FBI by hand to recover pieces of evidence down to approximately  $\frac{3}{4}$ " in size.<sup>13</sup> After the investigation, the Coroner supervised the restoration of the site to its pre-crash appearance, as much as possible, including backfilling of the crater, which is the final

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<sup>8</sup> FBI Agent Bill Crowley, quoted in CNN article, "FBI finished with PA Crash Site Probe," , September 24, 2001.

<sup>9</sup> Longman, 217.

<sup>10</sup> Longman, 217; comments by the FBI at news conference, reported in numerous newspapers on September 15, 2001.

<sup>11</sup> "DNA Testing to be Used to Identify Victims", The PittsburghChannel.com, posted 9:08 a.m. EDT, September 24, 2001 (quoting Agent Bill Crowley)

<sup>12</sup> Debra Erdley, "Crash Debris Found Eight Miles Away", Tribune-Review (Greensburg, PA), September 14, 2001. (quoting agent Bill Crowley of the FBI).

<sup>13</sup> ERM, 3.

resting place of the passengers and crew of Flight 93.<sup>14</sup> The area was backfilled in early October, 2001 and seeded with grass and wildflowers.<sup>15</sup> The burned trees were pushed over and chipped and the wood chips left at the site.

**12. Can I get closer? Why not?**

No. Only family members of the crew and passengers whose names are on an approved list, and authorized National Park Service staff are permitted inside the fenced area. Construction of the permanent memorial in the areas just outside the fence began in the spring of 2010. At this time, the temporary memorial location provides the best vantage point from which to view the crash site.

**13. Is there security at the crash site?**

National Park Service law enforcement officers are on-site and make periodic patrols.

**14. Are parts of the plane still down there?**

Yes. Periodically, small pieces of debris, such as wiring, insulation and metal parts, can be found.

**15. Where is the Bible that was found here?**

There were at least two Bibles found on the crash site, both in remarkably good condition. One of the Bibles belonged to passenger Donald Peterson. Many of those who responded to the crash site on September 11 reported seeing a white Bible lying on the ground near the edge of the woods. All personal effects whose ownership could be determined were returned to family members.<sup>16</sup>

**16. Who owns this land?**

The National Park Service owns the crash site, the location of the temporary memorial, and all the land where the permanent memorial will be constructed. As of November, 2009, the National Park Service owns 1,454.91 acres inside the boundary of Flight 93 National Memorial.<sup>17</sup>

**17. I heard that part of the plane was found in a pond. Is that true?**

Yes. An erosion and sedimentation pond known as Pond 5 was partially drained during the investigation so that debris could be recovered from it. The pond is located approximately 930 feet southeast from the crater.<sup>18</sup>

**18. What is that grassy mound near the crash site?**

It is un-related to the crash site and was not part of the debris field. It is simply a pile of soil that was on the site prior to the plane crash, which the mining company planned to use for backfilling an adjacent drainage pond.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Joe Smydo, "Volunteers scour Somerset County crash site, woods, to remove debris", *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, September 30, 2011.

<sup>15</sup> Longman, 260; ERM, 3, 11.

<sup>16</sup> Oral History Project interviews; Information provided by Coroner Wally Miller in speech at Somerset. Alliance Church, March 11, 2002, quoted in *The Washington Post Magazine*, May 12, 2002, "The Day the Sky Fell on Shanksville" by Peter Perl.

<sup>17</sup> Report to the Federal Advisory Commission, November 7, 2009.

<sup>18</sup> ERM, 29.

<sup>19</sup> Conversations with John Weir of PBS Coals, Inc. Land Department.

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**19. Is that a house I see in the woods?**

The roof that is visible in the trees behind the crater during the winter months is the roof of a picnic shelter which is adjacent to a small, seasonal-use cabin which is now owned by the National Park Service.

**20. How many houses are there in the woods?**

There are four small houses or cabins and several associated outbuildings in the woods immediately south of the crash site. One was a full-time residence at the time of the crash and received significant damage. The others were used seasonally. All are now owned by the National Park Service.

**21. Why do those trees look like they were burned?**

When the plane crashed in the field adjacent to the woods, the trees on the outer edge of a dense stand of hemlock were burned. About 100 damaged trees had to be removed following the crash. The evergreen trees that you now see just beyond the crash site are the trees that were once in the middle of this dense hemlock grove. Because they were originally closely surrounded by other trees, they didn't grow limbs on the lower part of their trunks.

**22. What do I see waving in the breeze at the crash site?**

When family members of the crew and passengers visit the area, they are permitted to go inside the fenced area. They often leave flags, flowers, and small tributes inside the fenced area.

**23. Were nearby residents home at the time of the crash?**

There are a number of nearby residents who had the harrowing experience of being in their homes on the day of the crash. At one home in the hemlock grove, residents felt the ground shake and feared war had broken out. Residents of nearby Lambertsville saw the plane fly over their homes, obviously in distress, just seconds before the crash. Employees at the scrap yard north of the site reported seeing the plane pass over their heads. Several then saw the plane crash into the ground.<sup>20</sup> A resident in a home on Lambertsville Road saw the plane flash silver in the sun just before it struck the ground. The owners of the farmhouse on the hill were working outdoors that day and heard and felt the explosion and saw the resulting fire and smoke. Pieces of debris began to fall onto the roofs of their buildings.

**24. Why did the government buy so much land here?**

The National Park Service was authorized by Congress to purchase the crash site, the surrounding debris field, and enough acreage around the site to protect the view, allow future visitors access to visit here, and permit construction of the Memorial. In addition, the Park Service owns land along the new access road which will allow traffic to enter the park directly from Route 30, an alternative that was requested by many local residents.

**25. Is it always windy here?**

Nearly always. The elevation at the crash site is 2,372 feet above sea level.<sup>21</sup> The lack of trees over this large reclaimed strip mine makes this a windy spot.

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<sup>20</sup> Longman, *Among the Heroes*, p. 212.

<sup>21</sup> Office of Merlyn Paulson, Inc., 2005; ERM .5.

**26. Does that water have anything to do with the plane crash?**

No. The water near the Memorial Plaza is a man-made wetlands created when the surface mining operation was completed and the land was reclaimed in the 1990's. The size of the wetlands varies with the amount of rainfall and snowmelt. It is home to ducks, geese, heron, and migratory waterfowl.

**27. How far is it from the Memorial Plaza to the crash site?**

It is approximately 100 yards from the plaza to the center of the crater location.<sup>22</sup>

**28. How much land is inside the fence?**

The fenced debris field encompasses 7.8 acres.<sup>23</sup>

**29. How was this land used before the crash? Why is it so open?**

Until the mid 1960's the area was farmland, pastures, and forests. Several small farms with houses, barns, and associated outbuildings were in the vicinity of the crash site. Beginning in the mid-1960's and continuing until 1995 the area was surface mined for coal.

**30. What are the coordinates of the crash site?**

78.54.48 West and 40.2.53 North.<sup>24</sup>

**II. Questions about Flight 93****1. What kind of plane was Flight 93?**

It was a Boeing 757-200, registration N591UA. The plane had a wingspan of 124 feet, 10 inches, and was 155 feet, 3 inches long. It had a capacity of 182 passengers--24 in first class and 158 in coach. The plane had a single, center aisle.<sup>25</sup>

**2. From what airport did Flight 93 take off?**

Flight 93 took off from Newark International Airport in Newark, New Jersey (later re-named Liberty International Airport). The flight left from Terminal A, Gate 17.<sup>26</sup> The scheduled departure time from the gate was 8:00 AM.<sup>27</sup>

**3. What was the original destination of Flight 93?**

Flight 93 was scheduled to land at San Francisco International Airport, San Francisco, California at 11:14 AM, Pacific Time.

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<sup>22</sup> ERM, maps and figures.

<sup>23</sup> ERM, 3.

<sup>24</sup> RT Environmental Services, Inc. *Phase I Environmental Site Assessment*, 2004. Executive Summary, 1.

<sup>25</sup> National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States, *The 9/11 Commission Report - final report with index*. (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2004), 456; Also see newer edition of the 9/11 Commission Report, published in 2006 by Barnes & Noble which includes the Third Monograph, "The Four Flights and Civil Aviation Security"; Longman, 3-4.

<sup>26</sup> Paul Schwartzman and others, "Attack on America", *The Washington Post*, September 16, 2001.

<sup>27</sup> Boarding pass of Flight 93 passenger, recovered at Flight 93 crash site.

#### 4. How many people were on board?

There were forty-four people on board: 2 pilots, 5 flight attendants, 33 passengers and 4 hijackers. There were 6 passengers and 4 hijackers in first class, and 27 passengers in coach.<sup>28</sup> Some early media reports about Flight 93 stated there were 45 people on board rather than 44. One passenger, Marion Britton, had purchased two tickets, leading to this confusion.

#### 5. Why was the plane so empty?

The thirty-seven passengers (including the four terrorists) represented a load factor of 20% of the plane's capacity of 182. This is considerably below the 52% average load factor for Flight 93 for Tuesdays in the three-month period prior to September 11.<sup>29</sup> Some authorities believe that those planning the terrorist attacks purposely chose flights to hijack which were commonly low in passenger numbers so they would face less resistance when trying to take over the plane. While the number of passengers on Flight 93 was below the norm for Tuesday mornings during the summer of 2001, there is no evidence that the terrorists manipulated passenger levels or purchased additional seats to facilitate their operation. The other planes hijacked on September 11, 2001 were similarly low in passengers. Flight 77, also a 757 had 58 passengers. Flights 11 and 175, both 767's, had 81 and 56 passengers, respectively.<sup>30</sup>

#### 6. Why was Flight 93 delayed leaving the airport in Newark?

The plane left the gate just one minute late, at 8:01 a.m., and ordinarily would have taken off about 15 minutes after pulling away from the gate. However, take-off was delayed because of the airport's typically heavy morning traffic. When Flight 93 left the ground at 8:42, the flight was running more than 25 minutes late. The other hijacked planes had taken off from Boston's Logan International Airport and from Dulles International Airport in Washington D.C. within 10-15 minutes of their planned departure times, lifting off at 7:59 (Flight 11), 8:14 (Flight 175), and 8:20 a.m. (Flight 77)<sup>31</sup>.

#### 7. What target did the hijackers intend to hit with Flight 93?

We know that Flight 93 was destined for Washington D.C. According to the 9/11 Commission Report, at 9:55 a.m., the terrorist pilot Ziad Jarrah dialed in the frequency for the navigational aid at Washington Reagan National Airport, clearly indicating that the attack was planned for the nation's capital.<sup>32</sup>

Two possible Washington targets have been discussed: the White House and the Capitol Building. According to the 9/11 Commission Report, Mohamed Atta, the leader of the 9/11 plot and pilot of Flight 11, met with Ramzi Binalshibh in Spain in July, 2001 to receive final instructions conveyed from Osama bin Laden. Binalshibh, coordinator for the 9/11 plot, and now in U.S. custody, said that Atta understood Bin Ladin's interest in striking the White House, but Atta said he thought this target too difficult. Atta explained to Binalshibh his plan to have two of the planes hit the World Trade Center, one fly into the Pentagon, and one hit the Capitol Building. If any pilot could not reach his intended target, Atta said, he was to crash the plane.<sup>33</sup> Statements entered at the Moussaoui hearing in April 2006 also indicate

<sup>28</sup> Longman, 21.

<sup>29</sup> 9/11 Commission Report, 3<sup>rd</sup> Monograph, 36.

<sup>30</sup> 9/11 Commission Report, 11.

<sup>31</sup> 9/11 Commission Report, 8-10, 32-33.

<sup>32</sup> 9/11 Commission Report, 457; Longman, 78, 182.

<sup>33</sup> 9/11 Commission Report, 243-44, 248.



that the Capitol Building was the most-likely target for Flight 93. There is also evidence that the date of the attack was chosen to coincide with the return of both the House and Senate to session after the summer break.<sup>34</sup> However, at least one family member has indicated that she was told by the authorities that the plane was destined for the White House.<sup>35</sup>

#### **8. Did the pilots of Flight 93 receive any warning of possible hijacker threats after the attacks at the World Trade Center?**

Yes. United Airlines Dispatcher Ed Ballinger, at 9:19 A.M., sent a text message to sixteen different United flights, including Flight 93. The message went out in groups to the aircraft. Flight 93 received the message at 9:24. The message was: “BEWARE ANY COCKPIT INTRUSION. . TWO AIRCRAFT IN NY, HIT TRADE CENTER BLDG”

At 9:26 Captain Jason Dahl responded to Ballinger’s message with “Ed confirm latest mssg plz—Jason.”<sup>36</sup>

#### **9. When and how did the authorities learn that Flight 93 had been hijacked?**

Hijackers began struggling with the captain and first officer at 9:28. Cleveland Air Traffic Controllers John Werth and Rick Kettell, heard this transmission from the cockpit: “Mayday. Hey get out of here. Get out of here. Get out of here.”<sup>37</sup> Pilots of other planes in the vicinity also heard the transmission on their radios and reported it to Cleveland Center.

According to Werth, the plane “started to [fly] erratically right after that. The plane’s altitude suddenly dropped 700 feet. I told the immediate supervisor who was within earshot that I think we have another one.”<sup>38</sup>

One of the flight attendants on board Flight 93 telephoned United Airlines at 9:35 to report the hijacking.<sup>39</sup>

#### **10. What was the flight path of the plane?**

The plane left Newark, New Jersey at 8:42 AM and followed a normal flight path across New Jersey and Pennsylvania and into eastern Ohio, reaching its assigned cruising altitude of 35,000 feet. After forty-six minutes of normal flight, at 9:28 AM, as the plane neared Cleveland, OH, terrorists broke into the cockpit, incapacitated the pilot and first officer, and took control of the plane, turning it southeast, on a path which would lead it to Washington D.C.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> *9/11 Commission Report*, 248.

<sup>35</sup> Deena Burnett with Anthony Giobetti, *Fighting Back: Living Life Beyond Ourselves* (Longwood, FL: Advantage Books, 2006), 201.

<sup>36</sup> *9/11 Commission Report*, 11, Third Monograph, 38; Air traffic Control Recording Specialist’s Report, December 21, 2001, National Transportation Safety Board.

<sup>37</sup> Air Traffic Control Recording Specialist’s Report, December 21, 2001, National Transportation Safety Board.

<sup>38</sup> “Flight 93 Controller Looks Back”, CBS News interview with Air Traffic Controller, John Werth, September

10, 2006. This story was written by CBS Evening News Investigative Unit producer Phil Hirschhorn.

<sup>39</sup> A log of phone calls made from on board the plane was submitted as evidence at the Moussaoui sentencing

trial in April, 2006. The exhibits can be viewed at [www.vaed.uscourts.gov/notablecases/moussaoui/exhibits/prosecution.html](http://www.vaed.uscourts.gov/notablecases/moussaoui/exhibits/prosecution.html) Look under Phase 2, exhibit

P200018; *9/11 Commission Report*, Third Monograph, 40.

After the hijacking, the plane passed over Canton, Ohio and crossed back into Pennsylvania. Now loosing altitude, the plane reportedly passed Pittsburgh about nine miles south of Pittsburgh International Airport<sup>41</sup>, then flew over Westmoreland County (PA), passing over the villages of Rector and Laughlinton. It crossed Laurel Mountain on the north side of Route 30, flew over Route 219, the Quemahoning Dam and the village of Kantner, crossed south of Route 30 and flew over the village of Lambertsville, over homes along Sturtz Road, and over the Rollock scrap yard before crashing.<sup>42</sup>

Had the plane maintained its speed and flight path, rather than crashing in Stonycreek Township, it would have arrived in Washington D.C. in 18-20 minutes. The nation's capitol is about 125 air miles from the Flight 93 crash site.<sup>43</sup>

#### 11. When did passengers and crew members begin making phone calls from Flight 93 to report the hijacking?

This list of calls and communications from on-board Flight 93 has been compiled using the best information available from various sources, primarily the exhibits entered by the prosecution in Phase II of the Moussaoui sentencing trial in April, 2006.<sup>44</sup> According to the evidence submitted at the trial, thirty-seven phone calls were made by 13 persons on board the plane between the time of the hijacking at 9:28 and the time of the crash at 10:03. All except the final two calls, placed at 9:58, were made from Airfones mounted on the backs of the seats in the rear of the plane. Airfone records reveal the name of the caller, the number they called, the time and duration of the call, and the row from which the call was placed. Two calls near the end of the flight were placed from personal cell phones. Several of the phone calls were recorded on answering machines. *Note: Not all incomplete or misdialed calls are included in this list.*

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| 9:28 | Cleveland Air Traffic Control hears the sounds of struggle in the cockpit, including the words "Mayday! Get out of here!" <sup>45</sup>  |
| 9:30 | Passenger Tom Burnett calls his wife, Deena, asking her to notify the authorities of their situation. <sup>46</sup> Burnett had already moved from his original seat in first class to a location in the back of the plane.  |
| 9:31 | Unknown Flight Attendant phones United Airlines at their maintenance center.   |
| 9:32 | The hijacker pilot, Ziad Jarrah, attempts to address the passengers by radio, saying, "Ladies and Gentlemen, Here the Captain. Please sit down. Keep remaining sitting. We have a bomb on board. So, sit." His message, actually, was broadcast to Air Traffic Control and other pilots monitoring that frequency. |

<sup>40</sup> 9/11 Commission Report, 11-12; National Transportation Safety Board, *Flight Path Study, United Airlines Flight 93, 19 February, 2002*, 2.

<sup>41</sup> Todd Spangler, "Phone calls reveal heroism aboard Flight 93", *Tribune-Democrat* (Johnstown, PA), A13, September 23, 2001.

<sup>42</sup> coordinates of the flight path supplied to the National Park Service by the National Transportation Safety Board.

<sup>43</sup> 9/11 Commission Report, 14.

<sup>44</sup> Phone call log submitted as evidence at Moussaoui in federal sentencing trial: Phase 2, exhibit P200018. The exhibits can be viewed at

[www.vaed.uscourts.gov/notablecases/moussaoui/exhibits/prosecution.html](http://www.vaed.uscourts.gov/notablecases/moussaoui/exhibits/prosecution.html)

<sup>45</sup> NTSB, *Flight Path Study*, 6.

<sup>46</sup> Burnett, 61.

- 9:32 An unknown Flight Attendant phones United Airlines to report the hijacking.
- 9:34 The plane turns off course for the first time, climbing, then beginning to turn.<sup>47</sup>
- 9:35 Flight Attendant Sandy Bradshaw notifies United Airlines of the hijacking<sup>48</sup>.
- 9:35 Unknown Flight Attendant phones United Airlines at their maintenance center – 2 calls
- 9:36 Passenger Mark Bingham phones his mother and aunt, reporting the hijacking.
- 9:37 Passenger Jeremy Glick calls his wife and continues the conversation until nearly 10 AM. During this conversation he indicates that the passengers have taken a vote and were determined to try to overpower the hijackers.<sup>49</sup>
- 9:37 Tom Burnett calls his wife again and reports that the hijackers are in the cockpit<sup>50</sup>
- 9:39 Hijacker pilot Ziad Jarrah again tries addressing the passengers saying, “Here’s the Captain. I would like you all to remain seated. We have a bomb aboard and we are going back to the airport and we have our demands. So please remain quiet.”
- 9:39 Passenger Lauren Grandcolas phones her husband, leaving a message on their answering machine.
- 9:42 Passenger Joe DeLuca phones his father.
- 9:43 Passenger Todd Beamer dials “0” on an Airfone and connects to a GTE telephone operator in Oak Brook, Illinois. The call continues until approximately 10:00. At the end of the call, he was heard to say, “Are you ready? Okay. Let’s roll.”<sup>51</sup>
- 9:44 Passenger Tom Burnett phones his wife, reporting that there was a group of passengers who are “going to do something.” According to his wife, he said, “We’re waiting until we’re over a rural area. We’re going to take back the airplane.”<sup>52</sup>
- 9:45 Passenger Waleska Martinez calls a friend at her office, but the call is not completed.
- 9:46 Passenger Linda Gronlund phones her sister, leaving a voicemail message in which she describes their situation.
- 9:47 Flight Attendant CeeCee Lyles calls her husband, leaving a message on their answering machine in which she says, “I’m on a plane that’s been hijacked. . . There’s three guys. They’ve hijacked the plane . . .”<sup>53</sup>
- 9:49 Passenger Marion Britton calls a friend, reporting the hijacking.<sup>54</sup>

<sup>47</sup> Animation of flight path developed by National Transportation Safety Board, based on Flight Data Recorder; NTSB, *Flight Path Study*, 2.

<sup>48</sup> 9/11 Commission Report, 33.

<sup>49</sup> Lyz Glick, with Dan Zegart, *Your Father’s Voice – Letters for Emmy about life with Jeremy-and without him after 9/11* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 2004); Longman, 153.

<sup>50</sup> Longman, 110; Burnett, 63.

<sup>51</sup> Lisa Beamer with Ken Abraham, *Let’s Roll! Ordinary People, Extraordinary Courage* (Wheaton, Illinois: Tyndale House Publishers, 2002), 211-215.

<sup>52</sup> Burnett, 67

<sup>53</sup> Phone call log submitted as evidence at Moussaoui in federal sentencing trial: Phase 2, exhibit P200018. The exhibits can be viewed at [www.vaed.uscourts.gov/notablecases/moussaoui/exhibits/prosecution.html](http://www.vaed.uscourts.gov/notablecases/moussaoui/exhibits/prosecution.html).

- 9:50 Flight Attendant Sandy Bradshaw phones her husband. She says that “passengers were getting hot water out of the galley and were going to rush the hijackers.” At the end of the call, Sandra told her husband that everyone was running up to first class and hung up the telephone.<sup>55</sup>
- 9:53 Passenger Elizabeth Wainio phones her stepmother, Esther Heymann. She ends the call saying, “They’re getting ready to break into the cockpit. I have to go. I love you. Good-bye.”<sup>56</sup>
- 9:58 Flight Attendant CeeCee Lyles uses a cell phone to call her husband a second time. As she ends the call she says, “They’re forcing their way into the cockpit.”<sup>57</sup>
- 9:58 Passenger Edward Felt dialed 9-1-1 on his cell phone from the rear restroom of the plane and is connected to Westmoreland County Control in Greensburg, Pennsylvania. He tells the dispatcher, “Hijacking in progress!”<sup>58</sup>

*(Note: Passenger Andrew Garcia is reported to have phoned his wife in the final moments before the crash, but the time this call was placed is not known. Also, according to Deena Burnett in her book “Fighting Back”, she received a total of four phone calls from her husband. The time of a fourth call is not known.)*

## 12. When did the struggle for control of the plane begin?

At 9:57 AM the passengers and crew began their assault on the cockpit. At least two passengers and one crew member terminated phone calls in order to join the revolt.<sup>59</sup> The plane was passing over Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania at this time. The terrorists responded by rolling the plane to the right and left, repeatedly, apparently attempting to knock the passengers off balance. An analysis of the Flight Data Recorder prepared by the National Transportation Safety Board reveals that there were about 2 minutes of “rapid full left and right control wheel inputs” beginning at 9:59 AM which resulted in “multiple 30 degree rolls to the left and right.” The analysis also reveals that between 10:00 to 10:02 AM there were “four distinct column inputs that caused the airplane to pitch nose up (climb) and nose-down (dive) aggressively.”<sup>60</sup> Planes in the sky over western Pennsylvania and persons on the ground witnessed this erratic flying.<sup>61</sup> The cockpit voice recorder captured the sounds of the assault which continued until the time of the crash at 10:03 AM.

## 13. I heard the plane went right over Johnstown, Pennsylvania. Is that true?

No. At one time there was fear that the plane was headed toward Johnstown. Cleveland Air Traffic Control advised authorities to evacuate the tower at the Johnstown-Cambria County Airport. But Flight 93 passed approximately 15 miles south of Johnstown before crashing in Stonycreek Township, Somerset County.<sup>62</sup>

<sup>54</sup> Pittsburgh Post Gazette, “For Chaos to Courage”, 28 October, 2001.

<sup>55</sup> 9/11 Commission Report, Third Monograph, 44.

<sup>56</sup> Statement from stepmother of Honor Elizabeth Wainio.

<sup>57</sup> 9/11 Commission Report, Third Monograph, 45.

<sup>58</sup> FBI, Transcript of call to Westmoreland 911 Center.

<sup>59</sup> 9/11 Commission Report, 13, Third Monograph, 45.

<sup>60</sup> NTSB, *Flight Path Study*, p. 2

<sup>61</sup> Various Oral Histories recorded by the Flight 93 National Memorial Oral History Project; Longman, 192-193.

<sup>62</sup> Various oral histories recorded by the Flight 93 National Memorial Oral History Project; Longman, 197.

**14. What was the time of the crash?**

10:03:11 AM<sup>63</sup>

**15. Did the plane go straight into the ground?**

Authorities say the plane hit the earth at a 40 degree angle, hitting right wing and nose first, upside down.<sup>64</sup>

**16. What time did the other planes crash in New York and at the Pentagon?**

8:46 a.m. – American Airlines Flight 11 hit the north tower of the World Trade Center

9:03 a.m. – United Airlines Flight 175 hit the south tower of the World Trade Center

9:37 a.m. – American Airlines Flight 77 hit the Pentagon

**17. I heard that Flight 93 was shot down by the military. Is that true?**

The evidence on the ground and statements given by eyewitnesses in the area and crash scene investigators do not support that theory. Numerous people saw the plane in the moments just before it crashed and reported that the plane was intact and not smoking. When the plane struck the ground, it left the impression of an aircraft body, two wings and a tail. All debris from the crash was found either inside or around the crater or down-wind of and beyond the crash site. No debris was found along the flight path prior to the crash site. FBI investigators repeatedly denied that there was any military aircraft involved in the crash of Flight 93<sup>65</sup>

**18. People living nearby said they saw other planes in the sky that day. Is that true?**

The FAA issued the order for all planes to land at 9:45 a.m., but many planes were still in the air at the time of the Flight 93 crash, being directed to land at various airports. One was a Fairchild Falcon 20 business jet already descending to land at the Johnstown-Cambria County Airport. The jet's pilot was instructed to drop to 1,500 feet to look for smoke. Another large plane in the area was an un-armed C-130 Air National Guard cargo plane en route to Minnesota from Andrews Air Force Base. While flying over Pennsylvania, seventeen miles away from the crash site, Cleveland Air Traffic Control asked the pilot if he could spot Flight 93 which had disappeared from radar. The pilot reported smoke on the ground. It was two minutes after the crash.<sup>66</sup>

At no time was military assistance requested regarding Flight 93. Northeast Air Defense Sector fighters (NEADS) never located the flight or followed it on their radar scopes. The flight had already crashed by the time they learned it was hijacked.<sup>67</sup>

**19. I heard that one of the engines was found in Indian Lake, a large residential area surrounding a lake. Is that true?**

No. Parts of the engines from Flight 93 were found near the crash site. One large part was excavated from the crater, and a fan from one of the engines was recovered from "Pond 5", a

<sup>63</sup> 9/11 Commission Report, 14, 30, 462; NTSB *Flight Path Study*, 2.

<sup>64</sup> NTSB *Flight Path Study*, 2.

<sup>65</sup> 9/11 Commission Report, 33; Longman, 263-265.

<sup>66</sup> 9/11 Commission Report, 30, 462; Longman, 214; information released by FBI spokesman, Bill Crowley in a press conference on Sept. 15, 2001, reported in numerous newspapers; 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Sheree Savage, "Witnessing, now remembering the 9-11 attacks", Minnesota National Guard, September 11, 2006;

<sup>67</sup> 9/11 Commission Report, 30; Longman, 263; John Farmer, *The Ground Truth: The Untold Story of America Under Attack on 9/11* (New York: Riverhead Books, 2010), Part III.

catchment basin which is 900 feet south of the crater.<sup>68</sup> Lightweight items were found in Indian Lake, a man-made body of water which lies only 1.5 miles away from the crash site along the trajectory of the debris field and consistent with the wind direction and speed (10 M.P.H.) at the time of the crash.<sup>69</sup>

## **20. Did they find the black boxes from this plane? Where were they?**

Both of the so-called “black boxes” from Flight 93 were found within the crash crater. The flight data recorder was recovered on Thursday, September 13, at a depth of fifteen feet. The cockpit voice recorder was recovered on Friday, September 14 at a depth of twenty-five feet. Both recorders yielded valuable information about the final minutes of Flight 93. The cockpit voice recorder from Flight 93 was the only voice recorder from the four hijacked airplanes to survive the impact and ensuing fire. The recorder captured the last 31 minutes of sounds from the cockpit via microphones in the pilots’ headsets, as well as in the overhead panel of the flight deck.<sup>70</sup> The “black boxes” are actually orange in color and are usually located in the tail section of the plane.<sup>71</sup>

A transcript of the Cockpit Voice Recorder tape was released in April, 2006 following the Moussaoui sentencing hearing. An analysis of the information gleaned from the Flight Data Recorder was released by the National Transportation Safety Board in August, 2006.

## **21. Did they ever release the cockpit voice recorder tape?**

The cockpit voice recorder was played for family members in April 2002, and was played for the jury at the Moussaoui sentencing trial in April, 2006. At that time a transcript of the tape was released to the public. The actual tape (the audio) from the Cockpit Voice Recorder was sealed by request of Flight 93 crew and passenger families.

## **22. What did they do during the investigation? How long did it last?**

Evidence recovery teams combed the area in thorough, systematic sweeps. Heavy equipment excavated the crater to an area measuring 85’ x 85’ and 27’-40’ deep in order to recover debris and evidence. Soil removed from the crater during the investigation was raked and sifted by hand and machine to remove debris, then returned to the crater. Debris was removed from tree-tops by arborists. A pond about 900 feet southwest of the crater was partially drained to recover debris. Debris was collected from the yards of nearby homes, farmer’s fields, and from around Indian Lake. More than one thousand persons representing more than 70 state, federal, and local agencies had credentials to work on the site.

The large body of investigators and the Pennsylvania State Police who were securing the perimeter left the site after thirteen days, on September 24, 2001. The crater was backfilled between October 1 and October 3, 2001. A six inch layer of topsoil was spread over the backfilled crater area and seeded with grass and wildflowers.<sup>72</sup>

## **23. Who was in charge of the investigation?**

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).

<sup>68</sup> Benjamin Chertoff, et al, “Debunking 9/11 Lies,” *Popular Mechanics*, March 2005, 81.

<sup>69</sup> John Wilfong, “Passengers Aboard United Flight 93 Considered Heroes,” *The New Republic*, 20 September 2001.

<sup>70</sup> *9/11 Commission Report*, 456.

<sup>71</sup> [http://www.nts.gov/aviation/cvr\\_fdr.htm](http://www.nts.gov/aviation/cvr_fdr.htm)

<sup>72</sup> ERM, 11, 41.

**24. How can I get more information about Flight 93?**

Several books have been written about the passengers and crew and the events of September 11. The 9/11 Commission Report, available in bookstores and on-line at [www.911commission.gov](http://www.911commission.gov), is an excellent source of information. The records of the 9/11 Commission are now available for researchers at the National Archives. There is a resource list at the end of this FAQ document.

**III. Questions about the Passengers and Crew****1. Were there any children on board the plane?**

No. The youngest passengers on the plane were ages 20 and 21. However, passenger Lauren Catuzzi Grandcolas was pregnant at the time of the crash.

**2. Which passenger said, "Let's Roll?"**

Passenger Todd Beamer spoke for approximately 14 minutes to two different GTE telephone operators in Chicago. During his conversation with operator Lisa Jefferson, Beamer revealed that he had learned about the destruction of the World Trade Center with hijacked planes, and told Ms. Jefferson about plans being made on board the plane to overpower the terrorists and re-gain control of Flight 93. At the end of the conversation, he laid the phone down and Ms. Jefferson said she heard Todd Beamer say to others on the plane, "Are you ready? Okay. Let's roll."<sup>73</sup>

**3. Were all the passengers Americans?**

One passenger was a citizen of Germany. One passenger was a citizen of Japan. One passenger was a citizen of New Zealand but was living in the United States.

**4. How many phone calls were made from on-board the plane?**

Thirty-seven phone calls were placed from Flight 93 after the time of the hijacking by 13 different people. At least five of the callers described the intent of passengers and crew members to revolt against the terrorists.<sup>74</sup>

**5. Which passenger called his wife from on-board the plane?**

Several passengers and crew members called their spouses. Passengers Tom Burnett, Jeremy Glick, and Andrew Garcia each called his wife; passenger Lauren Grandcolas called her husband; and flight attendants Sandy Bradshaw and CeeCee Lyles each called her husband. Other passengers called close friends, siblings, parents, and the authorities.

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<sup>73</sup> Longman, 198-204; Beamer, 214; Lisa Jefferson and Felicia Middlebrooks, *Called: Hello, My Name is Mrs. Jefferson. I understand your plane is being Hijacked* (Chicago: Northfield Publishing, 2006) 53.

<sup>74</sup> 9/11 Commission Report, 13.; Richard A. Serrano, "Heroism, Fatalism Aboard Flight 93", *Los Angeles Times*, 12 April 2006, quoting Det. Sgt. Ray Guidetti of the NJ State Police who had been assigned to an FBI anti-terrorism task force in Newark.

**6. Which passenger was a trained pilot and might have been able to fly the plane?**

Passenger Donald Greene was a licensed pilot. Passenger Andrew Garcia had experience as an air traffic controller.<sup>75</sup> However, none of those who placed phone calls from the plane mentioned a plan for how they would fly or land the plane if they succeeding in overpowering the terrorists.

**7. Which passenger was a rugby player?**

Passenger Mark Bingham was a rugby player.<sup>76</sup>

**8. Were any of the passengers veterans of the Armed Forces?**

Yes. These passengers and crew served in the U.S. military:

**LeRoy Homer:** graduate of the Air Force Academy, veteran of the Persian Gulf War. At the time of his death Homer was a member of the Air Force Reserves, serving as a recruiter for the Air Force Academy.

**Bill Cashman:** paratrooper in the U.S. Army, 101st Airborne Division

**John Talignani:** U.S. Army, served in Japan after World War II

**Andrew Garcia:** California Air National Guard

**Joe Driscoll:** U.S. Navy, served during the Korean War on a destroyer, U.S.S. Power

**Tom Burnett:** received an appointment to the Air Force Academy, but did not pursue his military career beyond the initial orientation at the academy.<sup>77</sup>

**9. Which passenger was a judo champion?**

Passenger Jeremy Glick was a collegiate judo champion.<sup>78</sup>

**10. Which passenger made the phone call from the plane's restroom?**

Passenger Edward Felt dialed 9-1-1 from the plane at 9:58, reaching the Westmoreland County (Pennsylvania) 9-1-1 Center. He reported he was on a hijacked plane.<sup>79</sup>

**11. Which one of the men had a wife who wrote a book about September 11th?**

Three widows of Flight 93 passengers have published books about their husbands and September 11<sup>th</sup>: Lisa Beamer's book about her husband, Todd, is titled Let's Roll. Lyz Glick, widow of Jeremy Glick, wrote Your Father's Voice, and Deena Burnett, widow of Tom Burnett, is the author of Fighting Back: Living Life Beyond Ourselves. Other books about Flight 93 and the passengers and crew include: Among the Heroes by Jere Longman, Called: Hello, This Is Mrs. Jefferson. I Understand Your Plane Is Being Hijacked. 9:45 Am, Flight 93, September 11, 2001, by Lisa Jefferson, and Hero of Flight 93, Mark Bingham by Jon Barrett.

Passenger Lauren Grandcolas was in the midst of writing a book at the time of her death. Her sisters were able to complete the book using her outline and notes, and published, You Can Do It! in 2005.

<sup>75</sup> Longman, 182-83.

<sup>76</sup> Longman, 134-35; Barrett, *Hero of Flight 93*.

<sup>77</sup> Longman, various chapters; Flight 93 National Memorial Oral History Project.

<sup>78</sup> Longman, 148; Glick, 117-121.

<sup>79</sup> Longman, 193-94.



**12. Who were the four big guys who broke into the cockpit?**

We don't know and will likely never know exactly what happened in the final moments before Flight 93 crashed. It seems likely that many, perhaps all of the passengers and crew were involved in some part of the struggle to re-take control of the plane from the hijackers, a struggle that began at 9:57 and continued until the time of the crash at 10:03. In the early weeks after the crash, much was written about four men who *may* have been part of this struggle: Tom Burnett, Mark Bingham, Jeremy Glick, and Todd Beamer.

**13. Did they find any bodies at the crash site?**

Enough remains were recovered to identify everyone that was on board Flight 93.

**14. Who was the oldest person on the plane? The youngest?**

The oldest passenger was Hilda Marcin, age 79. The youngest passengers were Deora Bodley and Toshiya Kuge, age 20 and Nicole Miller, age 21.

**15. I heard that one of the passengers was stabbed by the hijackers. Which one?**

The authorities believe that Mark "Mickey" Rothenberg was stabbed by the hijackers at the time of the cockpit take-over. He was seated in first class seat 5B, in front of one of the hijackers and was the only one of the first-class passengers who did not later place a phone call.

**16. I heard that one of the flight attendants was killed by the hijackers. Which one?**

It has been reported that Flight Attendant Deborah Welsh, who was the chief flight attendant or purser on this trip and was seated in first class at the time of take-off, was killed by the terrorists shortly after they took over the plane.<sup>80</sup>

**17. Did they kill the pilot and co-pilot when they took over the plane?**

We don't know. The 9/11 Commission report says the pilot and first officer were "incapacitated" by the terrorists. At another place in the report, it states that a passenger calling from on board the plane said that "the captain and first officer were lying on the floor of the first-class cabin and were injured or possibly dead."<sup>81</sup>

**18. Is it true that a lot of these passengers weren't supposed to be on Flight 93?**

Several passengers originally had reservations for Flight 91 which left Newark Airport at 9:20, also bound for San Francisco. When these travelers arrived at the airport early, they discovered they could catch Flight 93 which was scheduled to depart at 8:00.<sup>82</sup> One passenger was supposed to fly the previous evening, but his flight was canceled due to a fire at Newark Airport. He re-scheduled for Flight 93.<sup>83</sup> Another passenger's scheduled flight on September 10 was delayed due to a thunderstorm, so she re-scheduled for Flight 93 on September 11.<sup>84</sup> Several of the crew members were on Flight 93 because they had traded work shifts with others.<sup>85</sup>

<sup>80</sup> Longman, 207.

<sup>81</sup> 9/11 Commission Report, Third Monograph, 43.

<sup>82</sup> Longman, 8 (Burnett), 12 (Grandcolas), 13 (Petersons) Flight 93 National Memorial Oral History Project.

<sup>83</sup> Longman, 20 (Glick); Flight 93 National Memorial Oral History Project

<sup>84</sup> Longman, 55 (Miller). Flight 93 National Memorial Oral History Project

<sup>85</sup> Longman, 23 (Green), 25 (Welsh), 1-2 (Dahl) Flight 93 National Memorial Oral History Project

**19. Do the family members of the passenger and crew come here often?**

Yes. Many family members have been involved in planning for the permanent memorial, attending meetings held in the area. They visit the temporary memorial often.

**20. Who was at the controls of the plane when it crashed?**

According to the 9/11 Commission report, the terrorists remained at the controls of the plane, but realized that the passengers and crew were seconds away from regaining control. They believe that the terrorists decided to crash the plane into the ground rather than allow that to happen.<sup>86</sup>

**21. Where do you get your information?**

The 9/11 Commission report, primary source documents from the National Transportation Safety Board, the Federal Aviation Administration, and the FBI, published reports of press conferences with investigators at the time of the crash, testimony at the Moussaoui sentencing hearing, eyewitness reports, the Flight 93 National Memorial Oral History Project (more than 700 interviews have been completed), and books written by family members of the passengers.

**IV. Questions about the Hijackers****1. How many hijackers were on board the plane?**

Four. The other planes hijacked that day each had five hijackers.

**2. What nationality were the hijackers?**

The terrorist who was trained as a pilot, Ziad Jarrah, was from Lebanon. The other three terrorists were from Saudi Arabia. Their names were: Saeed al Ghamdi, Ahmad al Haznawi, and Ahmed al Nami.

**3. Were the hijackers seated in the first class section of the plane?**

Yes. The pilot-hijacker was seated in 1B and the others were seated in 3C, 3D, and 6B.<sup>87</sup>

**4. What weapons did the hijackers use on board Flight 93?**

According to one source, the terrorists were armed with “at least one box cutter that appeared to have been store-bought and another cutting device that seemed to be homemade—a piece of metal wrapped in tape.”<sup>88</sup> A published report describes “a stout fighting knife” with a locking, serrated blade that was found at the crash site.<sup>89</sup>

<sup>86</sup> 9/11 Commission Report, 14, 457.

<sup>87</sup> Longman, 25; A seating diagram for the flight was submitted as evidence at the Moussaoui federal sentencing trial: Phase 2, exhibit P200018. The exhibits can be viewed at [www.vaed.uscourts.gov/notablecases/moussaoui/exhibits/prosecution.html](http://www.vaed.uscourts.gov/notablecases/moussaoui/exhibits/prosecution.html).

<sup>88</sup> Longman, 42.

<sup>89</sup> Paul Sperry, “Fighting Knife Found in Flight 93 Wreckage”, *World Net Daily*, 22 March, 2002, (quoting a federal official who reviewed photos of evidence at the FBI headquarters);

The FBI reported that 14 knives and parts of knives, including a box cutter, were found at the Flight 93 crash site. None of the blades were longer than 3.5 inches.<sup>90</sup> Several of the passengers who made phone calls from on board the plane reported that one of the terrorists had a bomb strapped around his waist. Some of the callers expressed doubt about whether the bomb was real. No evidence of explosives was found at the crash site.<sup>91</sup>

### **5. Was Moussaoui supposed to be the fifth hijacker on this plane?**

No. The other planes hijacked on September 11 each were taken over by five terrorists, while Flight 93 had only four terrorists on board. Many people have speculated that there must have been an intended fifth hijacker who, for some reason, was not part of the attack. Zacarias Moussaoui, a French citizen with links to the al Qaeda terror network, attracted the attention of investigators for his suspicious behavior in flight training in Minnesota. In August, 2001 he was arrested for immigration violations and was in custody on September 11, 2001. At one time the media referred to Moussaoui as “the twentieth hijacker”, thinking that he intended to be the fifth hijacker on Flight 93. Later, it was established that Moussaoui was in training for a possible future terrorist attack, and was not part of the events of September 11<sup>92</sup>. Moussaoui was sentenced to life in prison for his involvement in the plot and failure to disclose information which may have led to preventing the September 11 attacks.

The 9/11 Commission report identifies another al Qaeda member, Mohammed al-Kahtani, as the likely “twentieth hijacker”. This Saudi man attempted to enter the country in August, 2001 at Orlando, FL, but was detained by an alert immigration official, Jose Melendez Perez. He was sent back to Dubai and later was arrested. He is in U.S. custody at this time.<sup>93</sup>

The al Qaeda network itself identified another Saudi man they say was “the twentieth hijacker”, Fawaz al-Nashimi, also known as Turki bin Fuheid al-Muteiry. This man was killed in a 2004 shootout with his country’s security forces.<sup>94</sup>

### **6. How long had the hijacking been planned?**

Osama bin Laden began issuing statements calling for Muslims to kill Americans as early as 1992. In 1998, Bin Ladin warned that he was going to “move the battle to American soil”<sup>95</sup> Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, mastermind of the 9/11 plot says they began talking about the “planes operation” in 1995. The men who would become the pilots of the four hijacked planes began working on the plot in 1999.<sup>96</sup> The men traveled to the United States in the summer of 2000 and enrolled in flight training schools. Ziad Jarrah, the Flight 93 hijacker-pilot, arrived in the United States in June, 2000 and began training in Venice, Florida.<sup>97</sup>

<sup>90</sup> 9/11 Commission, 3<sup>rd</sup> Monograph, 35, End Notes, 101, from FBI Report, “Summary of Penttomb Investigation, January 31, 2003.”

<sup>91</sup> 9/11 Commission Report, 13, 457; “DNA Testing to be Used to Identify Victims”, The PittsburghChannel.com, posted 9:08 a.m. EDT September 24, 2001.

<sup>92</sup> 9/11 Commission Report, 247, 273.

<sup>93</sup> 9/11 Commission Report, 11, 248; <http://americanradioworks.publicradio.org/features/911/a3.html>; Michael A. Smerconish, *Instinct: The Man Who Stopped the 20<sup>th</sup> Hijacker* (Guilford CT, Lyons Press, 2009).

<sup>94</sup> Katherine Shrader (Associated Press), “Video of 20<sup>th</sup> Hijacker Released”, *Somerset Daily American*, 21 June 2006.

<sup>95</sup> 9/11 Commission Report, 48.

<sup>96</sup> 9/11 Commission Report, 160.

<sup>97</sup> 9/11 Commission Report, 224.

The so-called “muscle hijackers” were identified and trained overseas in 2000 and arrived in this country on May 28, June 8, and June 27, 2001.<sup>98</sup>

## **V. Questions about Mining**

### **1. I heard this area was a mine before the crash. Is that true?**

The area was surfaced mined by several different companies beginning in the mid 1960’s and ending in 1995.<sup>99</sup>

### **2. What were they mining here?**

Bituminous (soft) coal. They mined the Upper Kittanning Formation, the Middle Kittanning Formation, and the Lower Kittanning Formation of the Allegheny Group.<sup>100</sup>

### **3. What companies did the mining here?**

In the middle 1960’s, Svonavec Coal Company mined the area. In 1969, a mining permit was issued for Diamond T Coal Company to work here. The area of the crash was reclaimed and backfilled from the late 1960’s through the early 1970’s and planted with pine trees and grasses. PBS Coals purchased Diamond T in the mid-1980’s and continued mining. The crash area was mined by PBS beginning in 1989 and reclaimed in 1994. The depth of the mining in the crater area was approximately 115 feet.<sup>101</sup>

### **4. Was the mine open at the time of the crash?**

The surface mining and the reclamation of the land was completed in 1998. A deep mine with an opening further north, near Route 30, was open at the time of the crash, but was closed in 2002.

### **5. I heard there were miners underground at the time of the crash. Is that true?**

Yes. However, the underground workings did not extend under or near the crash site.

## **VI. Questions about the Future**

### **1. Where will the permanent memorial be built?**

The most prominent features will be constructed in the grassy field encircling the crash site. The visitor center will be built in line with the flight path. The curving walkway and 40 Memorial Groves will circle around the bowl and wind down through the wetlands. The Memorial Plaza at the crash site will be built along the edge of the crash site, following the fence line established by the County Coroner. At the far end of the plaza, visitors will walk

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<sup>98</sup> 9/11 Commission Report, 528.

<sup>99</sup> ERM 2002, *Final Closure Report*, 3-4

<sup>100</sup> ERM, *Final Closure Report*.

<sup>101</sup> ERM, *Final Closure Report*.

along the flight path, reading the names of the passengers and crew engraved on eight foot high marble panels.

**2. What will the memorial look like?**

You may view the designs on line at our website: [www.nps.gov/flni](http://www.nps.gov/flni)

**3. When did they start construction?**

Ground was broken for first phase of the memorial on November 7, 2009 and construction got underway in the spring of 2010. This portion of the memorial, including the plaza, the ring road and a new entrance road from Route 30, will be dedicated on September 10, 2011.

**4. Who designed this memorial?**

Paul Murdoch Architects of Los Angeles, CA with Nelson Byrd Woltz of Charlottesville, VA were the winners of an open, international design competition in 2005. Their design was selected from over 1,000 designs submitted from 48 states in this country and 27 countries.

**5. When will the entire permanent memorial be complete?**

The next phase of the memorial (the visitor center, education center, and pathway to the Memorial Plaza) is expected to be completed by 2014. Timing of construction of the final phase of the memorial (the Tower of Voices) will be determined by the success of the fundraising campaign.

**6. Who will be in charge of the park?**

The National Park Service is the long-term steward of the national memorial.

**7. Who will pay for the permanent memorial?**

The funds to construct the permanent memorial have been donated by thousands of individuals, and from corporations and foundations. The federal government provided the funds to purchase the land and re-locate the commercial scrapyard on the property. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has contributed significant amounts of money. Details are available at the National Park Foundation's website, [www.honorflight93.org](http://www.honorflight93.org) and the NPS website, [www.nps.gov/flni](http://www.nps.gov/flni)

**8. How large will be the park be?**

There are approximately 2,200 acres within the boundary of the national memorial.

- Approximately 1,300 acres are needed for direct purchase to accommodate the following: protection of the crash site- the cemetery; protection of the land around the crash site; construction of the memorial, a modest visitor center and education center, roads, parking, and utilities; and provision for direct access to US Route 30, a major east-west highway.
- The National Park Service expects to protect an additional 900 acres (approximate) through partnerships and scenic easements.

**9. Will there be a visitor center or somewhere I can learn more?**

There will be a modest visitor center and education center.

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**10. Will the banner that my school brought here in 2003 be in the visitor center?**

Tributes left at the Temporary Memorial or sent directly to us have all been saved in the Flight 93 Memorial Collection. From that collection, exhibit items will be chosen to represent the diversity of tributes that represent the thoughts and feelings of people from the nation and the world. It is not known yet what objects will be on display.

**11. Will the memorial be open year-round?**

Yes.

**12. Will there be an admission fee charged at the park?**

Our enabling legislation precludes us charging an admission fee, but there may be fees charged for special events at times, and as appropriate.

**13. Who is the contractor that is building Flight 93 National Memorial?**

A contract was awarded to the firm of Arrow-Kinsley Joint Venture in November, 2009.

**14. Are there going to be memorials at the Pentagon and the World Trade Center site too?**

A memorial adjacent to the Pentagon opened in September, 2008. This memorial consists of 184 stainless steel benches, one for each of those lost, each cantilevered over a small pool of water. The benches are arranged by the ages of those lost. The memorial was built with private funds. There is also a small memorial and a chapel inside the Pentagon at the place where the plane struck.

The September 11<sup>th</sup> Families Association has opened an exhibit in the Tribute Center adjacent to Ground Zero in New York City. This exhibit includes photographs and information about Flight 93 as part of the story of the day's events. The 9/11 Families Association also offers walking tours of Ground Zero using family members, survivors and first responders as guides.

The National 9/11 Memorial at the World Trade Center site is called "Reflecting Absence". It was chosen through a design competition and has since undergone many revisions. This memorial will be dedicated in 2011. A museum at the site will be opened in 2012.

**15. Will the visitor center/museum here tell the story of what happened in New York and at the Pentagon also?**

We cannot tell the story of Flight 93 without telling the context of the entire day of 9/11. It is only because the passengers and crew found out what had happened at the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, that they realized that their flight too, was to be used as a missile to destroy the seat of our nation's government.

**16. Will the Flight 93 memorial honor the terrorists?**

Absolutely not. The legislation creating Flight 93 National Memorial (PL 107-226) specifically states that for purposes of this act the "terrorists on United Flight 93 on September 11, 2001 shall not be considered passengers or crew of that flight." While their part in the events of that day will be told at the memorial, they and their actions certainly will not be honored.

## **VII. Questions Children Ask**

### **1. Did all the people on board the plane die?**

Yes.

### **2. Were there any children or babies on board the plane?**

No. The youngest passengers were twenty years old.

### **3. Were any of the people on the plane related to each other?**

Yes. Among the passengers there was one married couple, and two sisters-in-law. There was also an unmarried couple going on a vacation together, and two good friends going on a hiking trip together. There were also two women who worked in the same office who were traveling together.

### **4. What did the passengers do for their jobs?**

Among the passengers were writers, salespeople, business owners, a nurse, a computer software engineer, importers, a teacher's aide, attorneys, a wine expert, an engineer, college students, federal government employees, a social worker, an arborist, business managers, and retirees.

### **5. Where are the passengers and crew buried?**

Family members received remains of their loved ones which they could bury at a location of their choice, or have the remains cremated. Because of the violence of the crash and ensuing explosion of Flight 93, many consider the Flight 93 crash site to be the final resting place of the passengers and crew.

### **6. Why can't I go down there?**

The crash site is a private place where the families of the passengers and crew can visit.

### **7. Where is the plane now?**

The recovered plane pieces, most of which were very small, were returned to United Airlines. Some pieces are housed at the Smithsonian Museum of American History in Washington, D.C.

### **8. Where are the hijackers buried?**

The remains of the hijackers recovered at the crash site are in the possession of the F.B.I.

### **9. What did the plane look like?**

The plane was gray and blue with a red stripe.

### **10. Why didn't they leave the hole there?**

The authorities felt that the most respectful way to treat the crash site after the investigation was to fill in the hole and planting grass and wildflowers. The fenced-in area is considered to be the final resting place of the passengers and crew of Flight 93. The Somerset County Coroner directed the restoration of the crash site. He wanted to restore the site, as nearly as possible, to the way it looked before the crash.

**11. Who were these bad men?**

The men who hijacked Flight 93 were part of an organization called al Qaeda. Members of al Qaeda don't like the way we live or the freedoms we have in the United States. They don't like some of the policies of our government.

**12. Why did the hijackers want to die?**

The hijackers were willing to do whatever was necessary, even if it meant they died, to bring about the deaths of many Americans and the destruction of American landmarks and symbols. It appears that they planned to fly this plane into the U.S. Capitol building in Washington D.C. where all of our country's Senators and Representatives and their staffs were meeting that day.

**13. Why did they crash the plane here?**

The hijackers realized that the passengers and crew were about to re-gain control of the plane, preventing them from achieving their goal of crashing the plane into a Washington D.C. landmark. They decided to crash the plane into the ground, killing everyone, rather than let the passengers and crew gain control of the plane.

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[www.911commission.gov](http://www.911commission.gov)

[www.nts.gov/aviation/cvr\\_fdr.htm](http://www.nts.gov/aviation/cvr_fdr.htm) (information about cockpit voice and flight data recorders)

[www.vaed.uscourts.gov/notablecases/moussaoui/exhibits/prosecution.html](http://www.vaed.uscourts.gov/notablecases/moussaoui/exhibits/prosecution.html) (photos of evidence from the Flight 93 crash site, exhibits relating to the sequence of phone calls and radio transmissions from on-board Flight 93, photos of passengers and crew members and the hijackers.

A Pittsburgh “Post Gazette” feature article of October 28, 2001 includes biographies of the passengers and crew. It can be found at: <http://www.post-gazette.com/headlines/20011028flt93mainstoryp7.asp>

Photos of the investigation and restoration of the crash site are accessible at the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources website:

[www.dep.state.pa.us/dep/emergency/pictures/investigation.htm](http://www.dep.state.pa.us/dep/emergency/pictures/investigation.htm)

The latest information about the Permanent Memorial planning process and the fundraising campaign can be found at the NPS website: [www.nps.gov/flni](http://www.nps.gov/flni) and at the National Park Foundation website, [www.honorflight93.org](http://www.honorflight93.org)

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